

HERMAN FARM, BARN
North side of Showalter Road, 0.3 miles
east of I-81, at Washington County
Regional Airport
Hagerstown vicinity
Washington County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-993-B

HABS
MD,
22-HAGTOWN,
3-B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HERMAN FARM, BARN
(~~Schindel Farm~~)

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Location: North side of Showalter Road, 0.3 mile east of I-81, at Washington County Regional Airport, Hagerstown vicinity, Washington County, Maryland

USGS Hagerstown, MD Quadrangle
UTM Coordinates 18 265800 4398060

Present Owner: Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland

Present Occupant: Unoccupied.

Present Use: Unused.

Significance: The Herman Farm barn is dated on a cornerstone, May, 1856, and is a well documented and intact example of a prevalent barn type of south central Pennsylvania and mid-Maryland throughout the 19th century. Like most barns in the area it has Germanic influence as evidenced in its use of a cantilevered forebay. The major significance of the barn lies in the excellent documentation that establishes its construction date, for whom it was built and a description in an advertisement of its appearance at 32 years after construction when it was sold. The fact that the major architectural elements of the barn have remained untouched enhance its value as an indicator of a prosperous farmer's agricultural practices and preferences. The general architectural character of the barn is typical of the region's mid-19th century agricultural buildings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Cornerstone inscribed "MAY 1856".
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Following is the chain of title for the Herman property:

Reference to the Chain of Title to the land upon which the Herman Farmhouse stands are found in the Land Records office, Washington County Court House, Hagerstown, Maryland.

1853 Deed, April 12, 1853, recorded in volume IN7, p. 613.

Samuel Brumbaugh and others
To
George Herman.

Deed, April 12, 1853, recorded in volume IN7, p. 614.

William Logan
To
George Herman.

1892 Deed, November 19, 1892, recorded in volume 99, p. 416.

Henry Herman, executor for George Herman,
deceased
To
William Sperow.

1900 Deed, March 31, 1900, recorded in volume 112, p. 355.

William O.B. Sperow
To
Moab Showater.

1917 Deed, March 31, 1917, recorded in volume 151, p. 20.

Moab Showalter
To

Alvah Showalter.

- 1945 Deed, October 1, 1945, recorded in volume 231, p. 490.
Alvah Showalter and Katie B. Showalter
To
Henson Flying Service, Inc.
- 1948 Deed, September 8, 1948, recorded in volumn 248, p. 665.
Henson, Inc.
To
Richard Henson.
- 1950 Deed, November 9, 1950, recorded in volumn 259, p. 539.
Richard Henson and Jane Henson
To
Joseph B. Schindel and Madeline Schindel.

Recent deed transactions record the sale of the property from Joseph Schindel to Fairchild Industries, Inc., an airplane manufacturer in 1976 and then to the Board of County Commissions of Washington County which owns the Washington County Regional Airport.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: No information has been located regarding the builder or contractor for the barn, or for suppliers of materials.
5. Original plans and construction: No plans, contracts, early drawings or views have been located of this barn. An 1888 description of the Herman farm in the form of an advertisement of sale has been quoted in its entirety, in the overview report, HABS No. MD-993.

As it was described in 1888, the barn was characterized as "massive", and "large and commodius" with wagon shed and corn crib attached and "with double, two mows". The barn retains its original form and most original elements. It is a large, rectangular stone and frame bank barn. Its east end wall is stone, but the west end where the wagon shed and corn crib are attached is timber framed. On either side of the ramp at the back

of the barn are brick granaries. The attached hog pen appears to be an early addition.

6. Alterations and additions: The few alterations and additions to this barn were identified through physical evidence. The oldest addition to the barn would appear to be the attached one story hog pen which extends perpendicular to the barn's south wall, from its southwest corner. The frame hog pen, sheathed with German siding, would appear to date from the turn of the century period. It is quite possible that the hog pen present today is the one described in the 1888 sale bill, although it is unlikely that it would have been built much before that time.

The other addition to the barn is the three bay garage extending to the rear of the barn, from its northeast corner. Set on concrete block foundations, this frame structure probably dates from the 1940s, during the Henson ownership.

The only other alterations to the barn are replacement of the original wood shingle roof. It is now covered with channel drain sheet metal, added during the mid-20th century. The area beneath the forebay is paved with poured concrete dates scratched into the concrete read 1925.

B. Historical Context:

The Herman Farm barn was built in 1856 for George Herman who was described in the 1877 Atlas for Washington County as a farmer. He had come to the Hagerstown area from Pennsylvania, according to the Atlas, and in 1853 began purchasing land which made up this farm. He built the barn first, which is clearly dated on its cornerstone, MAY 1856. Then he built the house which is dated October 16, 1860. It is not known where George Herman lived prior to constructing these buildings, but in 1877 he owned another property south of Showalter Road.

The barn is a large structure, measuring approximately 72 feet 6 inches by 34 feet. It is typical of barns in south-central Pennsylvania, mid-Maryland and the northern Shenandoah Valley where Pennsylvania influence was felt.

Referred to both currently and historically as a "bank barn," this type of structure had a ramp or bank of earth at the back which provided access to the upper level which contained the threshing floor and hay mows. The lower level which in Pennsylvania bank barns always faced east or south, provided shelter for animals, protected by the earthen wall at the rear and open to the sun in the front. At the front of this type of barn, there is a cantilevered overhang, called a forebay which most historians believe to be German in origin. The forebay extends seven feet beyond the front foundation wall of the Herman barn. Barns of this type which have come to be associated with the Pennsylvania Cultural Region were built of log, stone, brick or frame. Generally, log and stone were favored structural systems in the 18th century and brick or frame after the first quarter of the 19th century. The very large barns associated with the Cumberland Valley of Pennsylvania and Maryland are associated with agricultural prosperity of the 19th century when grain farming became fully developed. Although this barn is a late example of a stone ended structure it is an excellent representative of its type because it has received so few alterations and retains such original elements as the attached corn crib and wagon shed, original interior divisions and some original paint finishes.

The Herman Barn is a product of the rich agricultural tradition of south-central Pennsylvania and mid-Maryland where growing small grains and hay dominated. Washington County was a leading wheat producer for the state in the second half of the 19th century. Agriculture continues to be a major part of the local economy although it is severely threatened by development.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: This structure is a dated (May, 1856) example of a stone and frame bank barn typical of south-central Pennsylvania and mid-Maryland's prosperous farms of the 19th century. The attached brick graneries, wagon shed and interior framing are original as well as the painted finishes visible in the area that has been protected by the wagon shed. Although typical of barns of the time and place this one

is particularly noteworthy because it is dated and largely intact.

2. Condition of fabric: The barn is generally in excellent condition having been well maintained until recent years. There is some serious termite damage to the west end wagon shed.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Herman Barn is a rectangular structure measuring 72 feet 6 inches by 34 feet along the foundation walls. Extending from its rectangular outline are two graneries of brick on limestone foundations. The length of the barn is also extended 18 feet by a wagon shed and a 5 foot wide corn crib. Above the wagon shed and corn crib the barn floor, framing bents and roofing system continue as part of the main structure. The forebay at the south elevation projects 7 feet beyond the foundation wall.
2. Foundations: The foundations are of coursed local limestone, hammer-faced at the sides and rear of the building and chisel-faced at the front. The interior surface is more irregular rubble stone except along the south wall which shows evidence of coursing. A carefully cut cornerstone at the south end of the east foundation wall is inscribed with the date, May 1856. The foundations are approximately two feet thick.
3. Walls: The east end wall of the barn is of limestone construction from foundation level to the gable. The stone is coursed, hammer-faced local limestone. The graneries are built of brick above the foundations. The bricks are laid in common bond. All other wall surfaces are of wood, either vertical boards, or German siding which is applied to the area above the wagon shed extension.
4. Structural systems, framing: The east end wall of the barn is load-bearing stone masonry. All other load-bearing walls are of timber frame construction. The framing consists of four timber framed bents with sawn posts and beams with diagonal bracing all joined with mortise and tenon joints secured with wooden pegs. The

roof truss system uses purlins in a diagonally braced system. The overhanging front supports the roof system above it and extends from the load-bearing bents which rest on the foundation. The flooring rests on puncheon joists set close together, but spaced randomly. These in turn rest on four large beams, scarf jointed in sections and running the length of the barn. These beams rest on large posts which are sawn, about one foot square and placed at regular interval along the east-west axis of the barn.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: None of these elements are on this barn.
6. Chimneys: This barn has no chimneys.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The barn typically has many doors reflecting its use as an animal shelter and storage facility. Beneath the forebay where the animals reside, there are six doors, three of which were for animal use opening into stall and stable areas, and three which were for human use giving access to entryways and feeding areas. Remaining doors are of two types: board and batten single leaf doors and those with two leaves, divided approximately in half with two separately hinged pieces, top and bottom. Three large doors open from the framed wall of the upper forebay. They, too, are of board and batten construction. In the east end wall there are two doors, one in the foundation of the granery and another immediately above at the granery floor level. A similar arrangement of doors is located in the west end framed wall immediately south of the granery, opening into the wagon shed area. At the rear of the barn, large double leaved doors open onto the threshing floor to allow machinery to enter and exit the barn. Hung with large cast iron hinges, these doors are latched by means of a wooden bar which swivels and slides into a groove in the sill. In each leaf of the door are smaller wicket doors also of board and batten construction. All hardware is cast iron and is original. Doors are suspended from long strap

hinges set on spike pintles in the frames. Latches are open-lift type.

- b. Windows: Windows in the barn's lower level are barred with horizontal cut spindles which are set into holes cut into the jambs. These are the original configuration. Upper level windows are filled with louvered vents and are located in the east and west end walls, within the gables.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof is gabled. The current covering is channel drain sheet metal dating from the mid 20th century. The original roof covering was wood shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The roof overhangs the end gable walls, an original feature. There is no decorative barge or eaves trim. Plain boxing at the eaves is present along the north elevations of the graneries. Elsewhere, rafter ends are exposed beneath the roof.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: A gabled wall dormer is centrally located along the south face of the roof line. Its purpose is to accommodate a high door above the threshing floor area. The barn has no cupolas or towers.

C. Description of the Interior:

- 1. Floor Plans: The barn is divided into horse and cattle sections at the ground floor level. The east bay contained horse stalls and the remainder of the area for cattle. Although the interior framing system remains intact, the division of space has been altered by rearrangement of railings and fencing within the barn. The second level of the barn is divided by the framing bents. The two central bays were the threshing floor and the end bays were hay mows. Movable logs, hewn level on to sides were laid across the lower girts of the threshing floor bents to allow hay to be stacked on them if necessary. Several of these logs remain in place. At either end of the north wall of the barn, the brick walled graneries can be accessed.

2. Stairways: There is a crude ladder/stair that accesses the animal, lower level with the upper threshing floor at the northwest granery area. A hinged door can be let down over the stairwell openings.
3. Flooring: The floor of the ground level is poured concrete, probably dating from the early 20th century. The only dated concrete was beneath the covered walkway under the forebay, dated 1925. The upper barn floor is of wide pine planks with no finish.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings of the lower level are covered with multiple layers of white wash. From the wagon shed, original finish of the brick graneries exterior surface is visible, consisting of staining in red iron oxide and white striping of the joints.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Doorways and doors are functional and plain. The interior surface of the doors is vertical tongue and grooved boards with horizontal battens. They are unpainted. Jambs are rough without moldings or trim.
 - b. Windows: The location of the windows was noted in the exterior description. The interior surfaces of the window openings which are actually ventilators with horizontal bars or slats depending upon their location, are unpainted at the upper level of the barn, and at the ground floor level, they are whitewashed.
6. Decorative features and trim: The interior of the barn is plain and functional with no ornamentation. There are no cabinets, cupboards or fireplaces. In the ground floor end walls of the barn, there are recesses in the stone walls into which are set wood boxes for the storage of horse grooming gear and other small items.
7. Hardware: Hardware in the barn consists of hinges and latches. Hinges are cast iron strap-type set on spike pintels driven into the jambs. Most doors have cast iron lift latches or wooden slides with cast iron

keepers.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: The barn has no systems for heating and air conditioning. Ventilation occurs through openings in the stone and wood sided walls. The stone end of the barn at the upper level has vertical slits with beveled sides to ventilate the mow area.
- b. Lighting: The ground floor of the barn was wired for electric lights during the mid 20th century, probably the 1940s. The system consists of exposed wires and metal boxes containing bulb sockets. No earlier lighting fixtures or devices are present.
- c. Plumbing: There is no plumbing system in the barn. An early 20th century cast iron trough with an automatic shut off is located along the west foundation wall of the barn in the wagon shed. Two poured concrete troughs are located in the barn yard, one at the east end of the barn and the other directly in front of the hog pen. These troughs are fed by galvanized pipes.

9. Original Furnishings: No furniture, draperies, carpets or such material is associated with the barn.

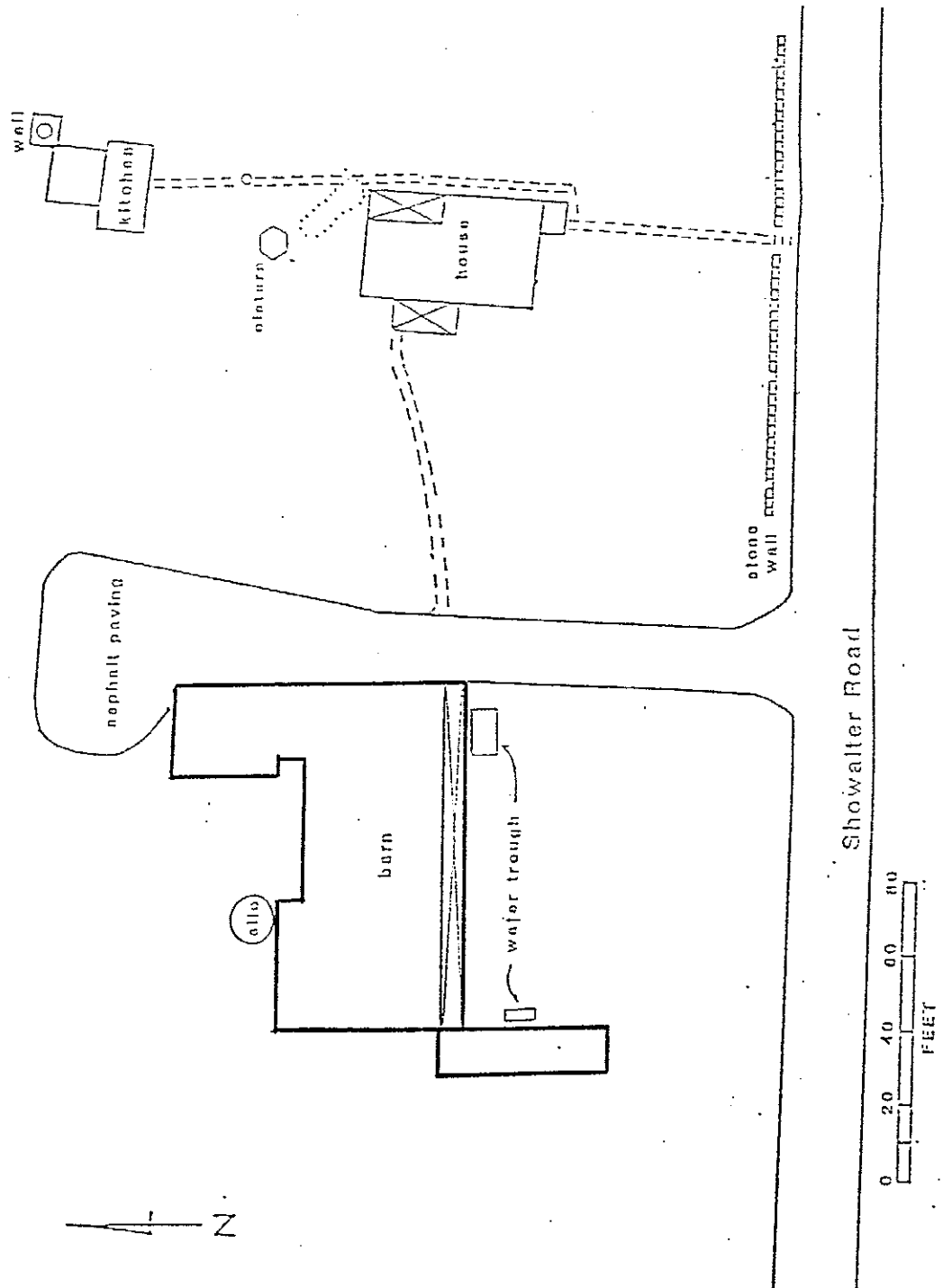
D. Site:

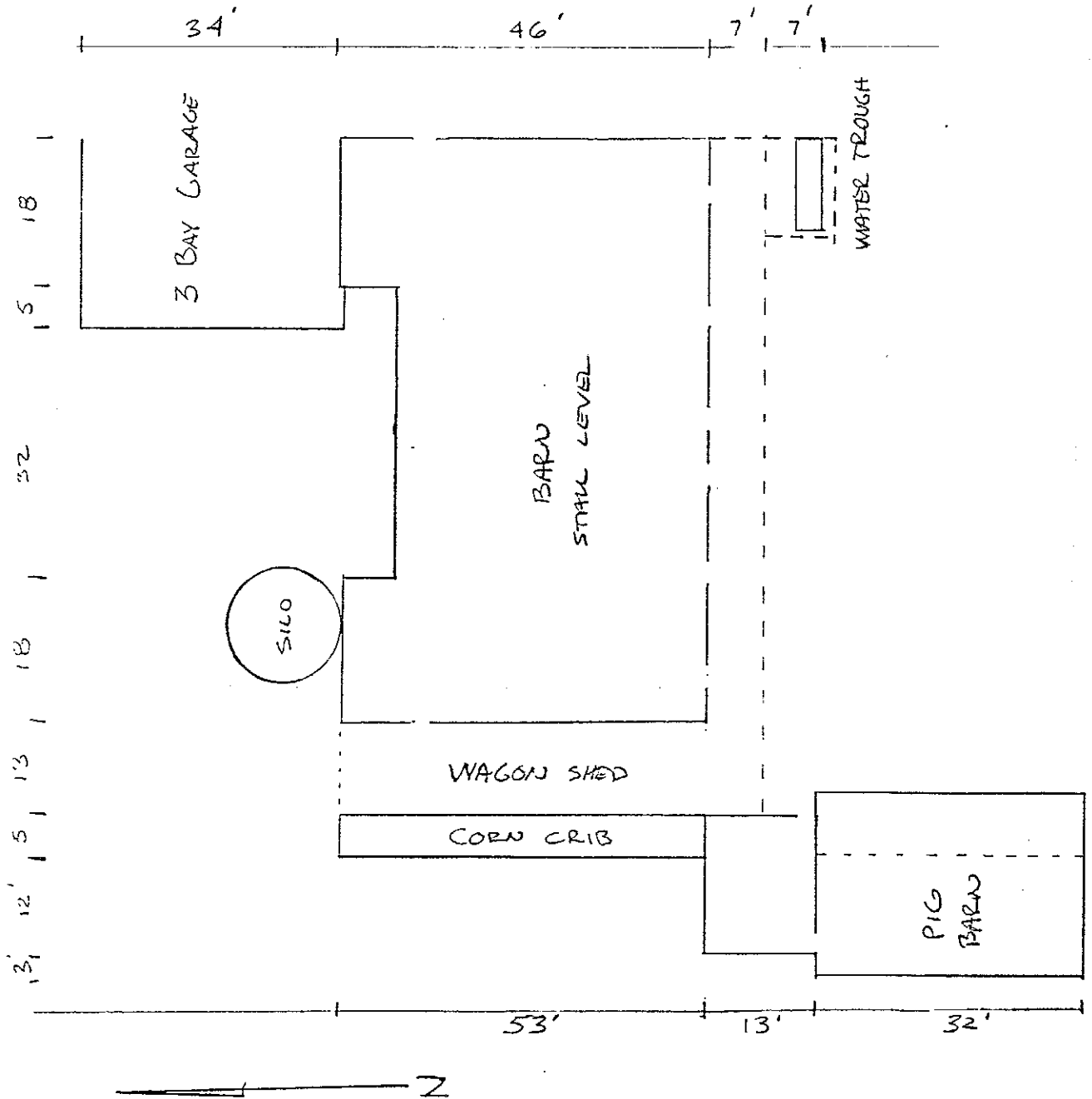
1. General setting and orientation: The Herman Barn faces south, about 80 feet north of the north edge of Showalter Road. It is situated in an area of flat limestone land, near the center of the valley between South Mountain on the east and the North or Tuscarora Mountains on the west. The barn is on an axis with the house and includes a barn yard between it and the road. The front or south face of the barn is sheltered by the overhanging forebay which is warmed by the sun in winter and provides shade in the summer. The hog pen has been constructed along the west side of the barn yard, facing east, taking further advantage of the sun and blocking the wind from the west.

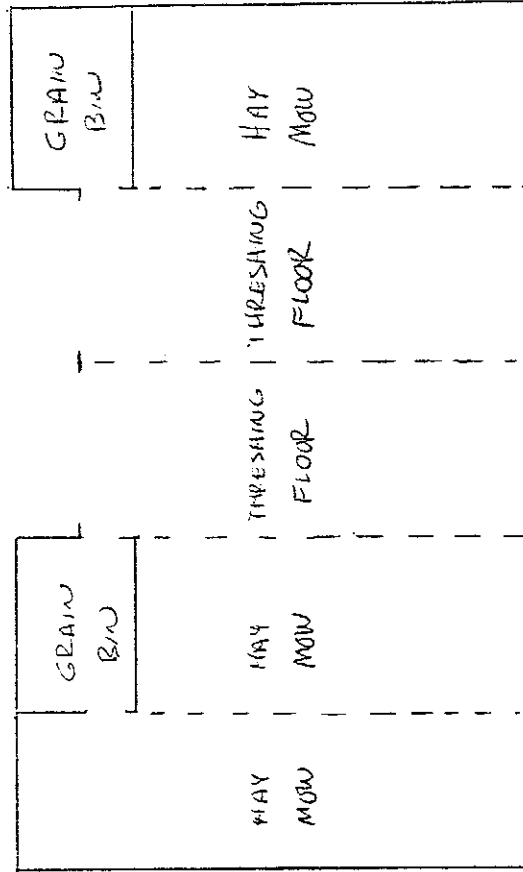
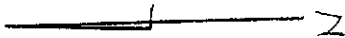
2. Historic landscape design: There is no planned landscape effort associated with the barn. Roadways led around the barn from the east side to the ramp giving access to the threshing floor and to the wagon shed. The area beneath the forebay was covered with poured concrete to provide a protected walkway to give access to the stable area.

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January 08, 1990







BARN
 UPPER LEVEL